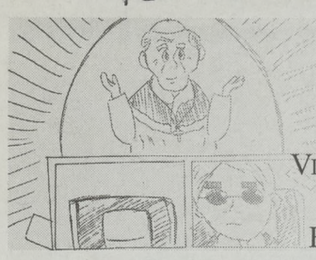
12-6-06



OPINION PG. 2
PAPAL DRAMA
OPPOSING POINTS OF VIEW ON ISLAM'S TAKE ON THE POPE AFTER HIS VISIT TO TURKEY.

VALLEY LIFE PG. 4
GIVING BACK
VALLEY PAIRS UP WITH PENNY LANE TO GIVE NEEDY KIDS A MERRY CHRISTMAS.

SPORTS ONLINE
BASKETBALL
MONARCHS LOSE BY THREE TO LONG BEACH.

ONLINE EDITION
EXTENDED CONTENT
FOR ADDITIONAL COVERAGE VISIT THE VALLEY STAR ONLINE.
WWW.LAVALLEYSTAR.COM

WWW.LAVC.EDU

WWW.LAVALLEYSTAR.COM

VALLEY STAR

THE INDEPENDENT STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF LOS ANGELES VALLEY COLLEGE

VOLUME 65, ISSUE NO. 9 | DECEMBER 6, 2006 | IT'S *YOUR* NEWSPAPER

DANIEL KANE /VALLEY STAR

AFTER THE STORM - The New Orleans skyline provides the backdrop for the remains of a train yard outside of the French Quarter post-Hurricane Katrina. Reconstruction has been slow since the 2005 hurricane while New Orleans faces a dwindling population and a shortage of funds.

Students to Aid Katrina Rebuild

BY ANA KACZMAREK AND JESSICA SHAFFER
STAFF WRITERS

The devastation in the Gulf Coast after Hurricane Katrina drew scores of college students from around the nation to come help rebuild after the storm. This spring break a group of Valley College students will have the opportunity to give as they travel to help rebuild homes with Habitat for Humanity outside of New Orleans.

Inspired by her students, African-American Studies Assistant Professor Tara Lake has been holding meetings with media figures involved in the issue to educate her students about the struggle to rebuild New Orleans 15 months later.

"I think that there are a lot of people who believe that they're no longer hearing about Hurricane Katrina and because of that people have forgotten about the issue," said Lake. "We're not talking about it anymore and the reality is that lots of people are still suffering."

Lake and her students have created the Hurricane Katrina Fund, a committee that is working to raise money to send a group of students out to the region.

"One of the things we're trying to do is bring awareness so it's not forgotten," said Jamoceo Black, chair of the fund. "We want our students to know and our community to know that this is what we're doing, as far as LAVC giving back to New Orleans in our own special way."

Lake said her students brought the idea to her. "I had a number of students who showed up the first week [of the semester] and Katrina was very much on their minds," she said. "They wanted to talk about the issue of race, the issue of class, about empowerment and disempowerment and how those factors work here in the United States."

Almost immediately, a student raised the possibility of sending students from Valley to help, and the group has been gaining momentum ever since.

"It's a tragic thing that happened to America," said biology major Christine Johnson. "We're all here to help out, help the cause; whatever we can do."

The group has put on three events featuring lectures from prominent media figures and showed Spike Lee's four-hour documentary "When the Levees Broke" over the past couple of weeks to familiarize themselves and other students with different aspects of the situation.

"It gave us an educational background from the point of view of the actual people that were in the tragedy," said Black of the film.

"To give statistics isn't as [effective] as when you actually are able to bring what is [personal]," said Lygeia Ferragalo, English major and BSU member. "It's definitely got me thinking about what I can do."

see '*Katrina*' page 3

Students Snap Photos With Pro Guidance

BY KHARA HUBERMAN
STAFF WRITER

Valley College photography students who participated in the J. Paul Getty Museum project "Where We live" can look forward to seeing their work in a traveling exhibit next spring.

The project is named after Getty exhibit "Where We Live: Photographs of America from the Berman Collection," is designed to provide a unique opportunity for promising photography students while also engaging them in close study of significant artworks on view at the Getty.

"Your eye and your mind have to be very perceptive of what you're looking at," said William Christenberry, a photographer who worked with Valley photographers on the project. "[The photograph] may not be something that is beautiful to some people, [but] it's all in the mind of the person behind the camera lens. You have to be willing to dive in and run with it."

Along with Christenberry, who helped pioneer utilization of color in fine arts photography, three renowned photographers worked with students at other Los Angeles community colleges.

Each artist was assigned 10 students whose goal was to photograph their surroundings with techniques the artist taught them.

"This partnership with the Getty is a wonderful opportunity for Valley students," said Valley President Tyree Wieder. "It gives them the experience of working with established photographers and it gives the photographers the opportunity to meet our students and learn about their talents."

Valley student Ima Kuroda, a cinema and photography major, spoke about what she learned, saying, "Anything can be art." Kuroda said she learned that straightforward photographs with designated themes and colors could be aesthetically pleasing just as much as photographs fabricated to look a certain way.

Valley students were accompanied by Christenberry and went to Lankershim and Van Nuys Boulevards where they were free to roam and take photos of whatever they found interesting.

"It was a wonderful experience for me [because] they were all very anxious and attentive to go out on the cityscape and roam around with me," said Christenberry.

Steven White, an art collector and councilmember on Valley's Arts Council spearheaded the project.

White said the goal is to inspire young artists to create works connected with their home communities and to provide opportunities to learn from professional photographers by working directly with them.

"I consider it an important role… to connect museum exhibitions with a diverse public so that art on display can inspire others to do creative and innovative work," said Peter Tokofsky, a Getty education specialist responsible for college programs and public lecture series. "Collaborating with four community colleges was a perfect way to accomplish those goals."

The Getty Photograph's Council will pay to frame 40 of the best pictures taken by the students. The museum will arrange a traveling exhibit of the photos starting in February at Valley and resume in fall 2007 at the other three schools.

One-Stop Makes Registration Easy

BY JESSICA SHAFFER
STAFF WRITER

Along with the telephone and Internet, students at Valley College can now register early for their classes on campus when they attend One-Stop Registration Days. The event allows students to meet with counselors, register for their classes and pay for them all in the same place.

One-Stop was started in Fall 2005 to help students register for classes in accordance with Valley's enrollment drive to boost attendance at the college, which directly impacts funding received by the school. The success of the last event, which drew almost 1,000 students, pushed the school to add an extra day this semester, according to Vice President of Student Services Yasmin Delahoussaye.

"Everything is in one place," said Delahoussaye. "Whether you want to pay for your parking; whether you want to pay for your classes; whether you want to get financial aid, you don't have run to the financial aid office."

To promote the event, Valley sent out flyers to every eligible student, has an ad on the school web page and is offering a $250 gift certificate to the Valley College Bookstore and an iPOD Nano as door prizes.

To take part in One-Stop, students need to have completed at least one semester at Valley and attending is the only way for students to register before their priority enrollment date.

"It was pretty helpful," said Jane Santin, who attended the event last semester. "I got to sign up early for English, which was helpful because that class filled up pretty quickly."

If 35 or more students want to take the same class on the event date and that section is closed, the school will create another class for those students. The only classes that cannot be guaranteed are science classes due to lack of lab space.

Valley also plans class schedules for future semesters based on student demand shown through their participation at the event.

"We want students to tell us when they are coming because then we can be prepared for them," said Dean of Enrollment Management Florentino Manzino.

see '*OneStop*' page 3

VALLEY PEOPLE

Professor Prefers the View From Above

BY TONY SILVA
STAFF WRITER

If you happen to pass by the Math Science Building, you might see Professor Richard Raskoff with his white beard and habitual smile probably talking to a student about geography.

The earth science professor is always willing to engage in conversation about his favorite subject, sometimes even with people he doesn't know. That affable and engaging quality makes him a beloved instructor at Valley College.

"I've always loved teaching here at Valley College," said Raskoff. "It's been more than 40 years since I first started working here, but each day is like whole new experience for me."

This joie de vivre is a true art form for someone who has lived in the San Fernando Valley most of their life, graduating from North Hollywood High School, moving onto Valley, UCLA and finally graduating from Cal State Northridge with a degree in Science.

Raskoff, who has a strong spirit of adventure, could have easily moved away, yet chose to come back to Valley in 1962 to teach oceanography, geography and meteorology.

His students rave on RateMyProfessor.com about how easy going Raskoff is, calling his class "amazing" and his field trips "unforgettable." With a positive attitude wherever he goes, it's not surprising that students reciprocate in kind.

"[Raskoff] is a great guy; very energetic [and] always willing to help students out whenever they have questions," said political science major Andrew Feher. "He offers an abundance of field trips and really tries to give you a hands on approach to geography."

Although Raskoff no longer teaches full time, he can still be seen around campus often chatting about science.

"We've been married for the

see '*Raskoff*' page 3

DANIEL KANE/VALLEY STAR

SWIMMING WITH RASKOFF- Richard Raskoff, a teacher at Valley College, would always bring an inflatable shark in case his students didn't see any real ones while inside shark cages on oceanography field trips. He never had to use it.

OPINION

ONE WAY OR ANOTHER

A LOOK AT AN ISSUE FROM BOTH SIDES. THIS WEEK: **DID THE POPE'S VISIT TO TURKEY SMOOTH THINGS OVER OR FUEL MUSLIMS' ANGER?**

■ Make your voice heard! Participate in the online poll at *www.lavalleystar.com*

Muslims Have a Right to be Upset Over Pope's Words

BY KRISTEN BECKER
STAFF WRITER

Muslim Turks met Pope Benedict XVI's visit to Turkey with anger, skepticism and some peaceful protests. Although this cold reception was the direct result of offensive comments the pope made about Islam, the negative reaction among Muslims can also be blamed on the bitter and often bloody history between the Catholic Church and Islam.

In September, Pope Benedict XVI highlighted the animosity between the two religions. He gave a speech in Germany, in which he quoted a 14th century Byzantine emperor.

The pope quoted, "Show me just what Mohammed brought that was new, and there you will find things only evil and inhuman, such as his command to spread by the sword the faith he preached."

Perhaps this one incident would not have had an affect on the papal visit to predominantly Muslim Turkey if it had not resonated so strongly with Muslims worldwide who remembered the Church's own bloody past.

In the Middle Ages, various popes called on Catholic warriors to invade the Holy Land, which was under Muslim control, and "liberate" the places that are sacred to Christianity (and also to Islam and Judaism). Countless Muslims were killed during these conflicts for no reason other than the fact that they weren't Christians. The Catholic Church also has a history of forced conversions and still professes the belief that Catholicism is the only one true religion.

In a statement the Vatican claimed that the pope's intention was to use the quote "as a means to undertake … certain reflections on the theme of the relationship between religion and violence in general." The pope's decision to use Islam as an example was misguided at best, and at worst a deliberate attempt on the part of an influential religious leader to present Islam as a religion full of hatred and violence.

While condemnation of religiously motivated violence in today's world is needed, Pope Benedict chose to instead to reinforce the West's stereotypes of Islam as bloodthirsty and cruel. His words served to fuel the anger and distrust Muslims already feel toward the West.

Although the pope used someone else's words, he made the decision to use that particular quote, which referred to Islam as evil and inhuman; this decision showed what little regard he has for Islam and inter-faith dialogue. If he is so concerned about violence in religion, he could have pointed to many examples of the Catholic Church deviating from Christ's teachings of peace and acceptance of all.

Given his previously stated sentiments, it is difficult to believe that the pope is sincere when he talks about respecting other religions. "[Muslims and Christians] are called to work together," Pope Benedict said when he met with Turkish officials. "The best way forward is via authentic dialogue between Christians and Muslims, based on truth and inspired by a sincere wish to know one another better, respecting differences and recognizing what we have in common."

Although his sudden respect for Islam may sound good, Muslims are right to be cautious. The pope claims to have an affection for Muslims, but the fact that he could be so insensible to Muslim sensibilities suggests otherwise.

Muslim Violence Over Pope's Words Proves His Point

BY MARTIN RUIZ
STAFF WRITER

As Turkey attempts to join the European Union it's at a crossroads of two worldviews: Europe and the Middle East, Christianity and Islam.

Pope Benedict XVI tried to bridge that gap last week in a visit to this predominantly-Muslim nation, as a sign of inter-faith dialogue between Christians and Muslims – a volatile and often violent relationship.

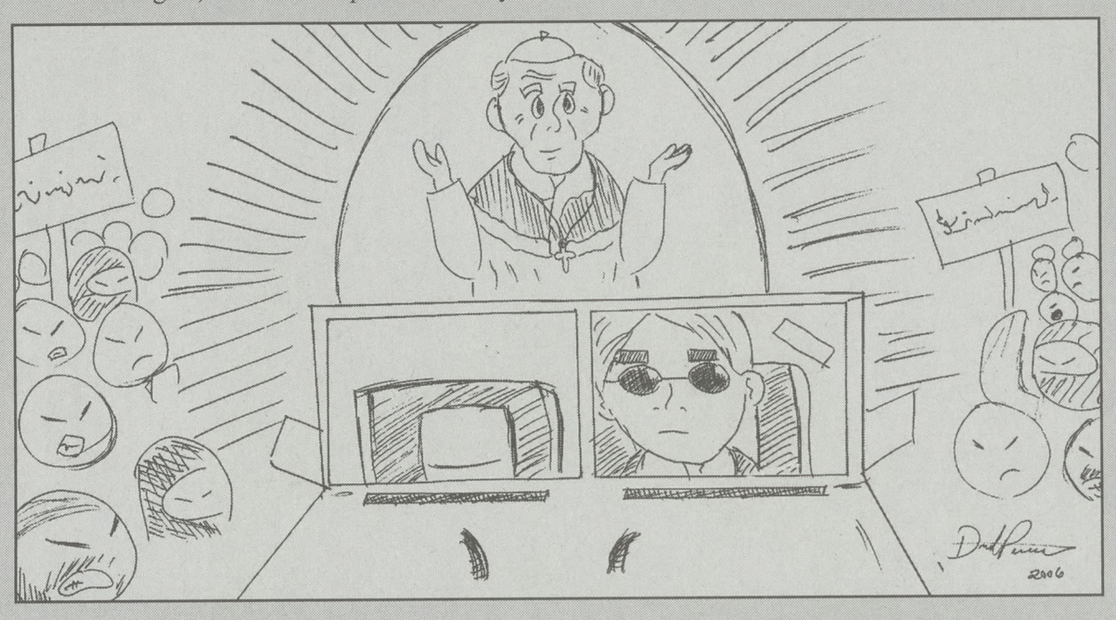


ILLUSTRATION BY DANIEL PARRA / VALLEY STAR

Although part of his mission was to bridge the gap between Catholics and Orthodox Christians, the real bridge-building was between Christians and Muslims. He advocated "reciprocity" of Muslim nations to allow Christians to practice their faith freely without persecution, a privilege Muslims in Christian nations already have.

"The best way forward is via authentic dialogue between Christians and Muslims, based on truth and inspired by a sincere wish to know one another better," said the Pope, figurehead for approximately one billion Christians. "Strengthening the bonds of affection between us is our common wish to live together in harmony, peace and mutual trust."

I'd like to hear Osama Bin Laden, the only worldwide figurehead for millions of Muslims, say that. Unlike Bin Laden, at least the Pope is willing to bridge the religious divide through dialogue rather than violence.

The primary purpose behind the Pope's trip to Turkey, however, was to quell the religious and political discord sparked by a speech in which he quoted a 14th century emperor who called Muhammad's teachings "bad and inhuman," and that he "spread by the sword the faith he preached."

I couldn't agree more with the Pope's critique of Muhammad, but in this age of terrorism and political correctness a comment like that can get you killed. Despite the Pope's apology and his attempt to make amends, some Muslims refuse to accept his apology. Within days of his speech, radical Islamists were issuing death threats, attacking churches, and even killing a nun in Somalia.

I guess the Koran doesn't teach anger management.

On his first day in Turkey, more than 25,000 protesters demonstrated. "This is a very high-risk visit," said Cengiz Aktar, a Turkish political scientist. "There is a vocal nationalist movement; and there is the Pope, a man who likes to play with fire."

I'm no fan of the Catholic Church either. The pope is essentially a religious king, which is contrary to Jesus' claim that "my kingdom is not of this world." The Inquisition and Crusades instituted by the Vatican during the Middle Ages were atrocious; and Pope Pius XII's support of Hitler during WWII was abominable.

However, Pope Benedict had a point and the violent reactions of angry Muslims proved it.

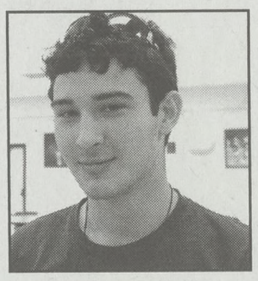
Islam is frequently hailed as a "religion of peace." Two of my best friends are Muslim, and they are certainly peaceful people. But terrorists have hijacked their religion – just as the Inquisition and Crusades hijacked true Christianity. Many moderate Muslims claim discrimination because Islam has been given a bad name. If this is so, it's the responsibility of those who perpetuate it, actively and passively, not those who perceive it as evil, to change that perception. Violence and terrorism in the name of any religion is hypocritical.

If peaceful Muslims don't like the image of death and destruction that extremists portray of Islam, they should collectively and publicly denounce it. Those who are able to speak out but don't cannot then complain when the Pope refers to their religion as evil.

Campus View

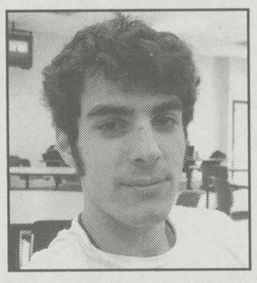
PHOTOS BY DANIEL KANE
TEXT BY WILL REYES

Do You Think The Pope Is Anti-Muslim?



"No, I think Muslims are anti-pope."

Max Lurya
Musicology

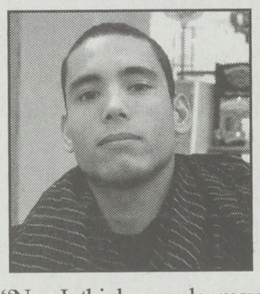


"I'm pretty sure that he would be, but I don't know enough about him."

Eyal Perish
Undecided

"No, because he was just reading someone else's words as an example."

Nicolette Pobre
Undecided



"No, I think people may have taken it wrong and exaggerated."

Mark Carter
Undecided

AN OPINION

Bush Rallies Funds for Think Tank to Rewrite His History in Office

■ If President Bush doesn't like the way his past decisions and actions make him look he should have gotten it right the first time.

BY KRISTEN BECKER
STAFF WRITER

President Bush has an affinity for trying to rewrite history. Whether he is changing the reason he decided to invade Iraq or claiming that he rarely used the phrase "stay the course" when talking about his policy toward the war, he seems to think that changing his story in the present will actually change the past. He is already planning to continue this misleading tradition when his time in the White House is over.

According to Thomas DeFrank of the New York Daily News, Bush is seeking to raise $500 million to fund the construction of his presidential library and a conservative think tank.

The fact that people who give "mega donations" ($10 to $20 million each) will be allowed to remain anonymous is not even the most provoking part of this story. Neither is the fact that the president is asking for such an exorbitant amount of money for his presidential library while public libraries are severely under funded. The most disturbing part of this plan is the conservative think tank, which will pay conservative scholars to write articles and books that talk favorably about Bush's policies.

"It's so much bigger than anything that's been tried before," a source told DeFrank. "But the more you have, the more influence [on history] you can exert."

The president is, in essence, attempting to buy a favorable chapter in history books. Is this really what conservatives mean when they claim that history will vindicate Bush's actions?

The fact that the stated claim of the think tank is to actively try to change history is a frightening prospect. Historical research is not supposed to be propaganda – that is exactly what anything funded by this think tank will be. Its scholarly works will be written by Bush apologists who want only to distort the facts. They want to convince others that this president's misguided policies did anything other than ruin America's reputation abroad and create even more chaos in the already volatile Middle East.

The president is, in essence, attempting to buy a favorable chapter in history books. Is this really what conservatives mean when they claim that history will vindicate Bush's actions?

History should be written, not only to inform future generations, but also to teach them lessons. Studying the past is useful when trying to avoid the mistakes of previous generations. If Bush is successful in buying a positive spin on his presidency, he could very well undermine this precious tool.

The president would do well to focus on completing the rest of his term in office before worrying about controlling how future generations will view his legacy.

Perhaps if he focused more on the present – on improving the situation in Iraq or combating the social and economic problems in this country – he could actually have something positive to offer future generations. He might not have to resort to hiring people to make his presidency look like a success.

We want to hear what you think!

Send letters to the editor to thevalleystar@yahoo.com -- Letters should be no longer than 300 words and are subject to editing.

'OneStop'

continued from page 1

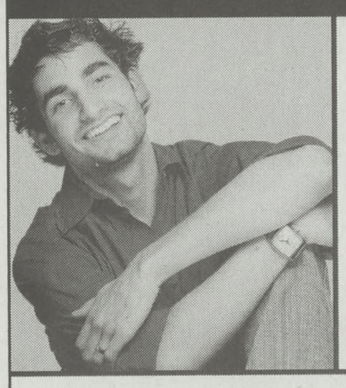
"Sometimes [this process] takes 10 minutes. Sometimes they need to see a counselor; they have to pay their fees; it might take an hour."

Manzino continued, "It's a good opportunity to get it done in plenty of time so then they can do their shopping and take their finals and do all of the things they need to do for their holiday."

One-Stop Registration Days will take place on December 12-13 from 8 a.m. until 8 p.m. in the Valley College Campus Center. Students who wish to attend should RSVP online at www.lavc.edu to allow for planning of the number of staff needed.

finish what you've STARTED...

The University of Judaism is the premier Jewish liberal arts college on the West Coast. Transfer students are an integral part of our personalized campus community. We value your experience, maturity and knowledge. We were commended by Princeton Review as a "Best Western College" and ranked among the top 150 liberal arts colleges by U.S. News & World Report.



Numerous scholarships available
7:1 student-faculty ratio
Distinguished faculty
Practical internships
Innovative mentor program
95% graduate school placement
Contact us to schedule a visit!

The College of Arts & Sciences offers a smooth transition in a small college environment to complete your bachelor's degree.

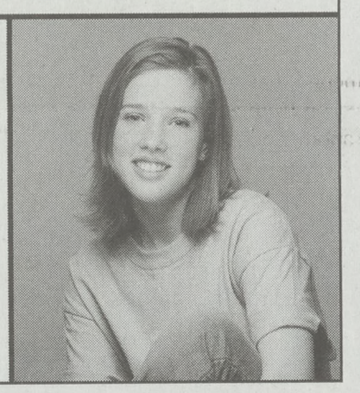
BACHELOR'S DEGREE PROGRAMS:
Bioethics and Natural Sciences (Pre-Med) • Business
Jewish Studies • Political Science • Literature & Communications
Liberal Studies • Psychology

Also offering dual programs for BA/MBA and BA/MAEd

UNIVERSITY OF JUDAISM

15600 Mulholland Dr.
Los Angeles, CA
90077-1519
(310) 476-9777 ext. 250
Admissions@uj.edu

UNIVERSITY of JUDAISM
www.uj.edu/transfer



'Raskoff'

continued from page 1

past 21 years and there's never been a dull moment in our lives," said Sally Raskoff, his wife, who also teaches at Valley. "Everyday is an adventure in my life with Richard. He just has a joy for life that's unparalleled."

A lot of that adventure comes from Raskoff's part-time hobby of flying airplanes, something he has been doing for almost 40 years. Raskoff is quick to share stories of trips he's taken to the Grand Canyon or the Catalina Islands, or a recent visit to the Mojave Desert.

His wife has accompanied him on many trips over the years, although she's not as passionate about it, but Raskoff likes bringing people along with him on the many field trips he takes yearly. Lucky students have even gotten the chance to learn to fly under his guidance.

Even though Raskoff has a penchant for travel, excitement and education, his true spirit shines through in the aspects of his life that he cherishes most.

"I've been to many places and have met many great people throughout the years, but the most rewarding thing in my life has been my family," Raskoff said. "I love my kids and my wife and I wouldn't change the experiences I've shared with them for anything in the world."

HUGE
opportunity to start your nursing career
in a less-stressful environment.

Live the life you've always dreamed of

Begin your nursing career in a supportive work environment where you'll have the time and resources to learn from your co-workers. Lancaster Community Hospital is a small, friendly 117-bed facility providing the Antelope Valley with the very best medical services. We offer a close-knit, family-type environment – you'll be surrounded by nurses who truly care about your professional growth. Plus, our location offers a great community and affordable new homes. As a new RN graduate, ask about our $1500 Employment Bonus. Generous Relocation and Mortgage Program are also available.

We're opening our brand-new hospital in nearby Palmdale in 2007. Join us as we build our team!

INTERESTED?
Visit us online at
www.lancastercommunityhospital.net
Lancaster Community Hospital
43830 N. 10th St. West
Lancaster, CA 93534
Phone: 661.940.1409
Fax resume: 661.940.1399
E-mail: ***debbie.whitt@uhsinc.com***

EOE, M/F/D/V.

Lancaster Community Hospital

UHS *An Affiliate of Universal Health Services, Inc.*

Committed to Service Excellence.

'Katrina'

continued from page 1

Lee's film has been acclaimed for its startling images that seem like they wouldn't be shot in the most powerful nation in the world and point out little known facts that question the government's role in the disaster.

"A lot of it is bringing it up and to the surface," said Ferragalo. "Because a lot of people are afraid to talk about racism or are afraid to talk about what's really going on."

There isn't a set group of students going yet, but the committee is working to fundraise to send a sizable group.

"I think people forget that in Southern California, we have so many people who are affected by Hurricane Katrina," Lake said of the interest in the issue at Valley.

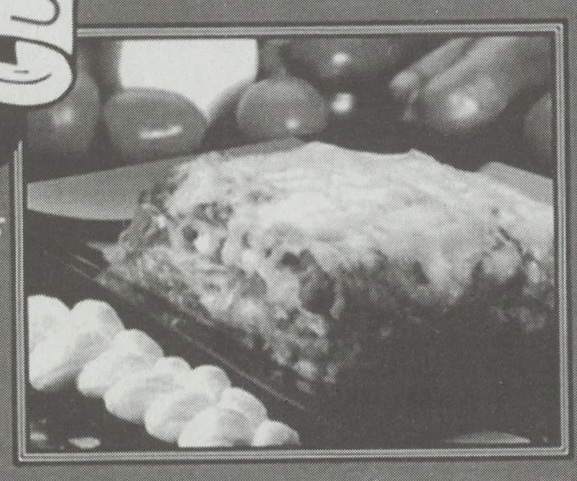
For now, students are learning about the committee through Lake's classes, but others are welcome to join and participate.

"It's not over," said Black of the struggle to rebuild New Orleans. "We haven't forgotten about them and there's still hope and there's still need out there."

$100 - $300 Daily
Become A Certified
BARTENDER!
40 Hour Course * Hands On Training
Job Placement * Interest-Free Payment Plans
National Bartenders School
(818) 783-0300
www.bartendingworld.com

Italian
MAZZARINO'S
Food
Established In The 1940's
ZAGAT RATED!

When It Has To Be Great Food... It Has To Be Mazzarino's!



Serving The Best Italian Food In Sherman Oaks For 60 Years!

Dine In ~ Take Out ~ Private Party Room
Catering In Your Studio ~ Office ~ Home
Short Notice OK!

Lunch Specials Everyday 11am ~ 3pm 9.95

*We Deliver!** min. 12.50 *some restrictions apply

12920 1/2 Riverside Drive ~ Sherman Oaks
Ample Parking In Rear ~ 818-788-5050
Open 7 Days Monday - Saturday 11am - 10pm ~ Sunday 11am - 9pm

$5.00 OFF
Any Two Entrees
Dine In ~ Take Out ~ Delivery
Mazzarino's Italian Food ~ 818-788-5050
Offer valid with Smart Mail coupon. One coupon per order.
Expires 12-31-06

$2.00 OFF
Any Large or Giant Pizza
Dine In ~ Take Out ~ Delivery
Mazzarino's Italian Food ~ 818-788-5050
Offer valid with Smart Mail coupon. One coupon per order.
Expires 12-31-06

GIANT 18" PIZZA SPECIAL
~ Giant Pizza – 1 Topping
~ 10 Buffalo Wings
~ 1 Order of Garlic Cheese Bread
15.50 Reg. 25.00
SAVE $10.00
Pick-up and delivery only.
Mazzarino's Italian Food ~ 818-788-5050
Offer valid with Smart Mail coupon. One coupon per order.
Expires 12-31-06

VALLEY LIFE

WEDNESDAY TO TUESDAY

Wednesday, Dec. 6

Panic! At the Disco @ Long Beach Arena, 300 E. Ocean Blvd., Long Beach, CA; 7 p.m. $22-29

Thursday, Dec. 7

Learn how to write an in-class essay @ LAVC's Writing Center. 1 - 2 p.m. H100 or H 102

Friday, Dec. 8

The Aquabats @ El Rey Theatre 5515 Wilshire Blvd, Los Angeles, CA; 8 p.m. $16.50

Saturday, Dec. 9

Damien Rice @ Orpheum Theatre, 842 S. Broadway, Los Angeles; 8 p.m. $33-38

Sunday, Dec. 10

Public Enemy @ House of Blues Sunset Strip 8430 Sunset Blvd., Hollywood, CA; 8 p.m. $30

Monday, Dec. 11

Kill Hannah @ El Rey Theatre 5515 Wilshire Blvd, Los Angeles, CA; 9 p.m. $14

Tuesday, Dec. 12

One Stop Registration Days @ LAVC Campus Center, 8 a.m. - 8 p.m.

Think Transfer!

Most CSUs and some UCs are still accepting Fall 2007 applications. Apply: www.csumentor.edu and www.universityofcalifornia.edu/admissions

Wednesday, Dec. 6

University of Phoenix
10 a.m.-1 p.m. Monarch Square

Thursday, Dec. 7

Undecided Major/Career Workshop 1 - 2 p.m.

Monday, Dec. 11

CSU Los Angeles
10 a.m. - 1 p.m.
CSU Dominguez Hills
9 - 11:30 a.m. Monarch Square
Undecided Major/Career Workshop 5:30 - 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Dec. 12

CSU Northridge
10 a.m. - 1 p.m. and 5 - 7 p.m.

All events in Career/Transfer Center unless indicated. Call (818) 9472646 with questions.

DANIEL KANE / VALLEY STAR

GIFT OF GIVING - Nazanin Chiniforoushan shows off some of the toys that have been donated to the "Be a Santa" program.

ASU Helping Those In Need

BY MARTIN A. RUIZ
STAFF WRITER

'Tis the season to help those less fortunate. For the past three years, ASU has been helping needy children through the non-profit organization, Penny Lane. The ASU is currently accepting gifts for kids ages 6-18 for Penny Lane's "Be a Santa" program.

"We ask students, staff or anyone who comes in to bring gifts for kids who don't have a home for Christmas…so they can have a good [holiday] celebration and know that someone cares for them," said ASU Athletics Commissioner Nazanin Chiniforoushan, who is spearheading the collection drive.

Types of gifts needed include, but are not limited to, socks, toys, snacks and toiletries. All items must be new.

Valley College usually puts together more than 300 bags for the holidays, according to Associate Dean of Student Services Sherri Rodgriguez.

You can drop off a gift at any one of the Penny Lane donation boxes located throughout campus: ASU, the Bookstore, Business Office, Transfer Center, Music, Child Development (MS 110/114), Sociology, Speech, Library and Math/Science departments by Dec. 15, to be delivered Dec. 16.

They will not accept sharp objects such as nail files, scissors or earrings, or anything containing alcohol, such as mouthwash. A specific wish list for individual kids may be obtained at the ASU office in Campus Center 102. Money is also accepted.

"The Sweet Escape" Isn't So Sweet

Gwen Stefani
"The Sweet Escape"
Interscope

★★★ out of 5

BY ELEARY S. NIXON
STAFF WRITER

Grammy-award winning singer and songwriter Gwen Stefani is back with her dance-oriented sophomore project "The Sweet Escape." The new album is the follow-up to 2004's quadruple-platinum "Love. Angel. Music. Baby.," which included the hits "Hollaback Girl" and "What You Waiting For?"

"The Sweet Escape" is unfortunately a 12-track understatement to the artistry that Stefani portrayed in her first album release. The album does not live up to the anticipation of its predecessor, perhaps due to Stefani recording this album largely throughout her pregnancy.

The album provides mildly catchy dance-inspired music, yet the songs steer completely away from the infectious lyrical content and versatility that made fans go ballistic for her first compilation. Nonetheless, the album had a string of heavyweight producers such as The Neptunes, Swizz Beatz, Tony Kanal, Pharrell and Nellee Hooper. Also, there are guest appearances by Pharrell Williams, Nellee Hooper, Tim Rice-Oxley and Tony Kanal.

Stefani's non-creative transformation from pop and R&B standard into an intended dance-retro album will leave fans not knowing how to catch the groove to most of the album's songs.

COURTESY OF MARK SQUIRES

The first single, "Wind It Up," is an animated Disney theme park-like orchestrated sound with an infectious yodel that Stefani opens the track with. Yet, the yodel is the only thing that makes the song interesting beyond her rapping over the beat.

The song "The Sweet Escape" is reminiscent to Madonna's late 80s' hit "Cherish," which provided a 60s' throwback sound with tambourines and soft-pitch background vocals.

The love gone wrong song "Breakin'Up," a rock-inspired anthem with annoying synthesizing instrumentals and flat vocals by Stefani, leaves you hitting forward on your CD player. The other songs on the album are mixed between mid-tempo ballads and retro-like beats, concluding to a moderate success at best.

The Orange County native has come a long way since her band No Doubt emerged into commercial success with their 1995 smash album "Tragic Kingdom." As the years have passed, Stefani has reinvented herself multiple times from ska-songstress, to pink-haired girl with braces, to blonde Mohawk chic, to sexy solo artist.

Stefani has been thrust into the spot-light, not only as a solo artist, but also actress, L.A.M.B. clothing designer, wife to rock-star Gaven Rossdale and mother to their 8-month-old son Kingston. The album may not live up to commercial standards but the joyride continues for Stefani and her growing family.

Stop Fraud: Protect Your Information

BY ELEARY S. NIXON
STAFF WRITER

The Christmas season has arrived and that means droves of people will be flooding retail stores and Internet sites, using their credit cards to near exhaustion, but the action of getting your loved one that last special gift may cost you more than you think.

Credit card fraud can affect anyone at anytime, and the increased use of credit cards in both retail and online stores during the holidays can make consumers more vulnerable to credit card fraud.

The Department of Homeland Security has stated that the cost of credit and charge card fraud to card holders and card companies alike may be as high as $500 million a year.

Many people believe that they are taking all necessary precautions to safeguard their personal and credit card information.

However, this year Consumer Reports expects that a record number of shoppers (50 percent) will shop online for at least one holiday purchase and online shopping is expected to jump 18 percent from last year, to a total of $32 billion, according to JupiterResearch.

Internet shopping is not uncommon, especially since so many consumers want to avoid the anticipated holiday in-store rush. Many people prefer shopping online because of the ease and luxury of surfing the web.

Unfortunately, the Internet opens up an excess of new credit fraud avenues.

There are six crucial tips that shoppers can adopt to reduce the likelihood of falling victim to scammers, hackers and credit card thieves, according to sixwise.com:

1. **When shopping online, make sure it is in a private place.** It is highly recommended that you only shop online from a computer you know and trust. Using a computer in a library or Internet café leaves you much more vulnerable to credit card thieves. On your personal computer, make sure you have installed up-to-date anti-virus, anti-spyware, anti-spamware and firewall software

2. **Keep an eye on your statements.** During the holidays, credit card companies actually shut down many of their flagging systems that watch for suspicious transactions.

3. **Keep up with your credit report.** The holidays are an ideal time to do so. You are entitled by law to one free copy of your credit report each year from each of the major credit reporting bureaus, and it can be ordered from www.annualcreditreport.com.

4. **Keep your credit cards separate from your wallet.** This way, if your wallet is stolen, your credit cards will be safe.

5. **Sign your credit card as soon as you get it.** Though it sounds obvious, many people carry around unsigned cards that leave them vulnerable to credit card fraud.

6. **Keep track of receipts.** Although many companies now block out all but the last four digits of credit card numbers on receipts, there are exceptions. If you are throwing away a receipt, check to see if your credit card number is on it, and if it is, shred it first.

This holiday season, be a very smart shopper and protect yourself from many of the pitfalls that consumers fall prey to daily. For more tips on protecting your credit card and personal information, visit sixwise.com and enter in 'credit card fraud.'

LIVES SHINE AT IABA!!
Do you work in the Human Services field or are you studying to do so? If so, IABA offers unique opportunities to be part of a team where service is rooted in ABA and strong, mutually caring relationships. For 25 years, our progressive programs and direct support have improved the lives of individuals with Autism and other developmental disabilities. Join us and make a contribution to our legacy through one of the following positions in the San Fernando Valley:
• Employment Specialist
• Community Support Companion
• Instructional Companion
• Behavior Support Companion
• Behavior Respite Companion
Other Direct Support positions available in LA, Ventura & Orange Counties. All exp. levels encouraged to apply. For immediate consideration, and to learn more about our positions, attractive benefits & compensation, send resume to:
jobs@iaba.com
Fax: 310.649.3109
Info: 310.649.0499
Visit us at: www.iaba.com
EOE
IABA
25 Years of Helping People
Learning.
Living!
Growing.

Cadillac Grill @ the LAVC cafeteria

Mon-Thur 7:30 a.m. - 7:30 p.m.
Friday 8 a.m. - 2 p.m.

HOT MEALS!!
PIZZA! SANDWICHES! ICE CREAM!

COME SEE US!